

Demands of the Faculty for Academic Freedom and Order

It is by now drastically and painfully obvious that the university is all too vulnerable to threats to its very existence. However, the massive physical destruction perpetrated on February 11 was only the culmination of several weeks of terror. We have witnessed the spectacle of a member of the faculty having to suffer public humiliation and disgrace over a prolonged period of time, without a scrap of evidence against him even having been publicly presented. What is to prevent the possibility of any other member of the faculty being gratuitously pilloried in the same manner?

We have lived through weeks of intimidation, disruption, and chaos. Administrators have experienced coercion; faculty offices have been forcibly entered; colleagues have been arbitrarily subjected to abuse, vilification, and slander in handbills and publications (sometimes anonymously authored). Faculty members who have tried to explain the university's point of view to public gatherings of students have been hysterically shouted down and denied the possibility of being heard--despite the fact that complaining students have received every courtesy when they wished to present publicly their viewpoint. Vital functions of the university had been brought to a halt. A duly constituted committee of the university was physically prevented from carrying on its legitimate work. Contempt for reasonable discourse and due legal processes has characterized three weeks. Many of the individuals who contributed to this state of affairs had in fact, no relation to this university at all. Some, indeed, even lacked any connection with the city of Montreal. Who can doubt that forms of violence were at play in this situation long before the disastrous day of February 11?

The stark fact that emerges from this situation is that the university is ill-prepared to protect the most elementary rights of the members of the faculty and it is ill-prepared to secure conditions necessary for the proper operations of the academic vocation.

Much has been heard recently about demands. It is high time the faculty began to make its own demands in order to secure its own rights and conditions of work.

Our demands follow:

1. We demand that anytime criminal acts are committed within the university community, criminal charges be brought and the maximum weight of the law of the land be exercised.

2. Adequate, full-time protection must be accorded to all vital and vulnerable areas of the university to prevent the possibility of occupation, damage, sabotage, or disruption of normal functioning.

3. If members of the faculty are subjected to slander from within the university community, the university must take immediate action to expose the sources of this slander, put a stop to it, and exact disciplinary action against the offenders.

4. In the event of demonstrations and other manifestations of student protest actions, outside interference and agitation must be prevented and eliminated--by use of legal injunctions and other means.

5. Individuals and groups (whether inside or outside the university community) who have demonstrated that their intention is to disrupt or destroy normal academic operations, or who refuse to accept the norms of free and reasonable discourse or who attempt to prevent the free exchange of ideas must be denied the use of university facilities (including the availability of space for posters, rooms for meetings and assemblies, access to university printing and publicity facilities, rights of distribution of materials, etc.). Offending persons should be subject to disciplinary action and injunctions may be sought to prevent them from entering the university.

6. All the students of this university who participated in the destructive activities of February 11 must be disciplined. If students from other universities were involved at any stage of the current crisis (and not only on the day of February 11), their names must be sent to the authorities at their own universities.

7. Disciplinary action must be exercised against all the students of this university who participated in the occupations on the 7th and 9th floors at any time since the occupations began.

8. Since occupations, sit-ins, barricades, etc. are clearly acts of force and coercion (mainly designed and implemented to impose the wills of tiny minorities in the majority), they are obvious violators of the norms of academic conduct and cannot be tolerated in a university setting. Therefore, these must be regarded as illegal and unacceptable measures and offenders must face disciplinary action.

9. Faculty members and organized groups with identifiable leaders should not enjoy special immunity. If such people (either in the present situation or in the future) aid and abet, organize, incite, encourage, and promote others to engage in occupations, coercive activities, destruction, etc., then they must share the responsibility and be subject to disciplinary action.

10. "Amnesty" cannot possibly be considered in the above instances.

11. If it is necessary in order to guarantee the peace and security of the university and its members, very serious consideration must be given to the possibility of establishing a university police or militia.

We, the undersigned, feel the above actions are necessary in order to permit the university to return to conditions whereby the wide-ranging spectrum of ideas may be presented, debated, and investigated.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM FROM THE VICE-PRINCIPAL

To DBC

Copy of a petition received signed by a number of faculty. A more generalized petition is also being circulated now